

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINSHA 10641 231041Z
ACTION AF-08

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SUBJECT: POLITICAL ELEMENTS OF MOBUTU'S ADDRESS TO THE NATIONAL
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

REF: KINSHASA 10629

1. SUMMARY: SPEAKING BEFORE THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ON DECEMBER 21, PRESIDENT MOBUTU LAID DOWN THE NEW GROUND RULES FOR
GOVERNMENT BUDGETING AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT IN ZAIRE. (COVERED)
IN REFTEL). HE ALSO SPOKE OF HIS DIPLOMATIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF
THE PAST YEAR, CALLED FOR GREATER COOPERATION BETWEEN STATES IN
THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, ADMITTED THAT ZAIRIANIZATION AND RA-
DICALIZATION HAD FAILED, PRAISED THE CHURCH FOR ITS NEW
PARTNERSHIP WITH THE STATE, AND ANNOUNCED CUT-BACKS IN
ALLOWANCES FOR ZAIRIAN STUDENTS AND DIPLOMATS. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 KINSHA 10641 231041Z

2. AFTER LAMENTING THE DEATH OF TWO GREAT FRIENDS, MAO TSE-TUNG
AND CHOU EU-LAI, MOBUTU REVIEWED WHAT HE REGARDED AS THE
POSITIVE DIPLOMATIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS GOVERNMENT IN 1976:
A. COMMENCEMENT OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA,
B. PRESIDENTIAL VISITS TO BOTSWANA, SWAZILAND, LESOTHO,
AND SENEGAL,

C. RECEPTION OF TOLBERT, GISCARD D'ESTAING, KISSINGER AND RUMSFELD,

D. COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH USSR, AND

E. KINSHASA ECONOMIC CONFERENCE OF THE OAU.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE, HE CALLED FOR GREATER COOPERATION BETWEEN RICH AND POOR STATES, AND FOR PROGRESS IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE.

3. THE PRESIDENT NOTED THAT THE PAST YEAR HAD BEEN ONE OF WORLD-WIDE ECONOMIC CRISIS WHICH HAD PARTICULARLY TOUCHED ZAIRE. HE REMARKED ALSO THAT ZAIRE HAD SUFFERED SPECIAL PROBLEMS, THAT ADMINISTRATORS INVOLVED IN ZAIRIANIZATION HAD BECOME TOO OCCUPIED IN COMMERCE, AND THAT UNDER RADICALIZATION, MANY COMPANY DIRECTORS HAD FAILED TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN COMPANY AND PERSONAL PROPERTY. HE STATED THAT THE TIME HAD ARRIVED FOR RETROCESSION AND A NEW PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN FOREIGN AND ZAIRIAN BUSINESSMEN. IN JUSTIFYING THIS CHANGE OF POLICY, MOBUTU STATED THAT A "STATESMAN MUST HAVE THE POLITICAL COURAGE TO CHANGE DIRECTIONS WHEN HE PERCEIVES THAT PAST DECISIONS HAVE NOT HAD DESIRED EFFECTS."

4. THE PRESIDENT PRAISED THE CHURCHES IN ZAIRE FOR WHAT HE TERMED "THE NEW SPIRIT" OF COOPERATION. HE STATED THAT "FOR THE FIRST TIME..., EACH CHURCH IS FORGETTING ITS OWN INTEREST IN ORDER TO COOPERATE, HAND IN HAND, WITH THE STATE IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG ZAIRIANS FOR THE FUTURE".

5. MOBUTU EMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS INTERESTED IN THE INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY OF ALL CITIZENS, THAT PRECISELY THIS HAD BEEN THE AIM OF THE LAW FOR THE SPECIAL NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 KINSHA 10641 231041Z

IN ADDITION, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY, HE NOTED, TO CUT GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES, TO REVIEW THE BUDGET OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WHERE FRAUD HAD APPEARED, TO PAY STUDENT STIPENDS DURING THE SCHOOL TERM ONLY, AND TO REPLACE THE MANY ALLOWANCES PAID TO DIPLOMATS BY ONE GENERAL ACROSS-THE-BOARD PAYMENT (PRESUMABLY LESS THAN THE ALLOWANCES).

6. COMMENT: MOBUTU'S SPEECH TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAD BEEN AWAITED BY MANY IN THE CAPITAL AS A MAJOR STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC POLICY. IT WAS NOT SURPRISING THEREFORE, THAT THE PRESIDENT DWELT ONLY BRIEFLY ON POLITICAL MATTERS.

7. MOBUTU FORTHRIGHTLY RECOGNIZED THE FAILURE OF ZAIRIANIZATION AND RADICALIZATION, AND HE GAVE A CLEAR IMPETUS TO THE NEW COMMERCIAL POLICY. WHILE MOBUTU MAY HAVE ALREADY SUFFERED THE LOSS OF AFFECTION OF THE NEWLY DISPOSSESSED (THE INEFFICIENT ACQUIREURS), HE CERTAINLY WON POLITICAL POINTS WITH OTHER ZAIRIANS BY PUBLICLY REJECTING THE DISCREDITED POLICIES

OF 1973 AND 1974.

8. THE PRESIDENT'S PRAISE OF THE CHURCHES, SOMEWHAT PERIPHERAL TO THE MAIN THRUST OF THE SPEECH, WAS NEVERTHELESS WELL PLANNED. FOR MONTHS, MOBUTU HAS RECOGNIZED THAT THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IS DEPLORABLE AND HE HAS SOUGHT TO PUSH THE RELUCTANT CHURCHES BACK INTO EDUCATION. THE CHURCHES FOR THEIR PART HAVE CONTINUED TO REQUIRE CERTAIN GUARANTEES OF THE STATE BEFORE ACCEPTING FORMALLY THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. THE PRESIDENT'S PRAISE MAY THEREFORE BE VIEWED AS A WELL-TIMED GOAD TO THE CHURCHES WHO ARE PRESENTLY NEGOTIATING WITH THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

9. FINALLY, MOBUTU'S TRIMMING OF STUDENT STIPENDS AND DIPLOMATIC ALLOWANCES WILL WIN LITTLE SUPPORT FOR HIM AT THE UNIVERSITY OR AT THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. ALREADY, WE HAVE HEARD BITTER COMPLAINTS AT THE DEPARTMENT, BUT WE DOUBT THAT THE DISGRUNTLEMENT WILL IMPACT ON GOVERNMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 KINSHA 10641 231041Z

POLICY. AT THE UNIVERSITY, WHERE STUDENTS ARE ALREADY COMPLAINING ABOUT LOW STIPENDS AND OTHER BREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES, DISSATISFACTION COULD TAKE A MORE VOCIFEROUS FORM. CUTLER

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